CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method for controlling a GUI display for a plug-in in an application
        supporting plug-ins, the method comprising:

        receiving, at run time, in the application from the plug-in a request to display a
5   GUI object, wherein the application has standards of appearance for the GUI
        display;

        responsive to the request, retrieving an XML representation of the GUI object
        that complies with the application's standards of appearance for the GUI
10   display; and

        displaying the GUI object in dependence upon the retrieved XML
        representation of the GUI object.

2.   The method of claim 1 further comprising installing the plug-in in the
        application, including configuring the application with the location of at least
        one XML representation of at least one GUI object.

3.   The method of claim 1 further comprising providing through the application
        for the plug-in access to a subset of a set of GUI objects supported by a GUI
        environment.

4.   The method of claim 1 further comprising providing GUI functions for the
        plug-in through a GUI API in the application, wherein receiving, at run time,
        in the application from the plug-in a request for display of a GUI object
        further comprises receiving a GUI API call from the plug-in.
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5.   The method of claim 1 further comprising:

receiving from the plug-in a request to retrieve user input responsive to the GUI object; and

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returning to the plug-in responsive user input.

6.   The method of claim 1 further comprising parsing the retrieved representation of the GUI object, wherein displaying the GUI object further comprises displaying the GUI object in dependence upon the parsed representation of the GUI object.

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7.   The method of claim 1 further comprising publishing XML syntax for representing XML GUI objects operable by a plug-in through the application.

8.   A system for controlling a GUI display for a plug-in in an application
        supporting plug-ins, the system comprising:

        means for receiving, at run time, in the application from the plug-in a request
5   to display a GUI object, wherein the application has standards of appearance
        for the GUI display;

        means for retrieving an XML representation of the GUI object in response to
        the request that complies with the application's standards of appearance for
10   the GUI display; and

        means for displaying the GUI object in dependence upon the retrieved XML
        representation of the GUI object.

9.   The system of claim 8 further comprising means for installing the plug-in in
        the application, including means for configuring the application with the
        location of at least one XML representation of at least one GUI object.

10.   The system of claim 8 further comprising means for providing through the
        application for the plug-in access to a subset of a set of GUI objects supported
        by a GUI environment.

11.   The system of claim 8 further comprising means for providing GUI functions
        for the plug-in through a GUI API in the application, wherein means for
        receiving, at run time, in the application from the plug-in a request for display
        of a GUI object further comprises means for receiving a GUI API call from
5   the plug-in.

12.   The system of claim 8 further comprising:

means for receiving from the plug-in a request to retrieve user input
responsive to the GUI object; and

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means for returning to the plug-in responsive user input.

13.   The system of claim 8 further comprising means for parsing the retrieved
representation of the GUI object, wherein means for displaying the GUI object
further comprises means for displaying the GUI object in dependence upon
the parsed representation of the GUI object.

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14.   The system of claim 8 further comprising means for publishing XML syntax
for representing XML GUI objects operable by a plug-in through the
application.

15.   A computer program product for controlling a GUI display for a plug-in in an
       application supporting plug-ins, the computer program product comprising:

       a recording medium;

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       means, recorded on the recording medium, for receiving, at run time, in the
       application from the plug-in a request to display a GUI object, wherein the
       application has standards of appearance for the GUI display;

10   means, recorded on the recording medium, for retrieving an XML
       representation of the GUI object in response to the request that complies with
       the application's standards of appearance for the GUI display; and

       means, recorded on the recording medium, for displaying the GUI object in
15   dependence upon the retrieved XML representation of the GUI object.

16.   The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising means,
       recorded on the recording medium, for installing the plug-in in the
       application, including means, recorded on the recording medium, for
       configuring the application with the location of at least one XML
5   representation of at least one GUI object.

17.   The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising means,
       recorded on the recording medium, for providing through the application for
       the plug-in access to a subset of a set of GUI objects supported by a GUI
       environment.

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18.   The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising means,
       recorded on the recording medium, for providing GUI functions for the plug-
       in through a GUI API in the application, wherein means, recorded on the

recording medium, for receiving, at run time, in the application from the plug-in a request for display of a GUI object further comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for receiving a GUI API call from the plug-in.

19.   The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising:

means, recorded on the recording medium, for receiving from the plug-in a request to retrieve user input responsive to the GUI object; and

means, recorded on the recording medium, for returning to the plug-in responsive user input.

20.   The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising means, recorded on the recording medium, for parsing the retrieved representation of the GUI object, wherein means, recorded on the recording medium, for displaying the GUI object further comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for displaying the GUI object in dependence upon the parsed representation of the GUI object.

21.   The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising means, recorded on the recording medium, for publishing XML syntax for representing XML GUI objects operable by a plug-in through the application.